

## First Great Mine Cave And Early Community Leaders Are Recalled

The firm of Mills Bros., has been serving Carbondale people for generations, Miss Alice Voyle Rashleigh points out in today's portion of her resume of Carbondale history.

Miss Rashleigh also recalls the first serious mine cave here, the disaster of 1846, and the heroism of Alexander Bryden.

Other names prominent in the early life of the community are included in the chronography. We give you now the sixth installment of the Rashleigh story:

Samuel Mills came to this village from Connecticut by ox-cart and established a mercantile business in 1834. John M. Poore came from Massachusetts in 1829 and was also engaged in the mercantile business, but in 1842 he went to Virginia, returning in 1845 when he became the partner of Samuel Mills. Poore and Mills were leading merchants of our city and the business is still carried on as "Mills Brothers, Est. 1844", the oldest in the city, with Tralles's, I believe, the second oldest.

Alexander Bryden emigrated to America from Scotland in 1842, and was appointed mine foreman here and continued as such until 1852. In January, 1846, in a mine cave, his feat of daring to rescue miners will always keep his name prominent in the history of Carbondale. About 40 acres of roof gave way and he risked his life to save others. In 1851, at the Odd Fellows Hall, Anthony Finnerty,

representing the miners, presented him with a compass and a case of mathematical instruments.

In primitive days, Carbondale was a scene of activity. There was plenty of cash for all kinds of produce, etc. Frequently, 50 teams loaded with wheat came in from the Wyoming valley.

E. H. Castle, visiting here in 1831, was so impressed that he walked from Syracuse in 1832 with a bundle of shirts and took up his residence in this active village, working for Deacon Hodgdon, hauling coal. Colonel Castle was an early member of the Odd Fellows in Carbondale, organized in April 20, 1838, and never allowed his membership to lapse.

The Masonic Lodge was chartered July, 1850. Royal Arch Masons and Eureka chapters were instituted February 19, 1855 and Palestine Commandery No. 14, Knight Templar, was organized May 1, 1856. The Father Matthew Total Abstinence Association was organized September, 1868, with John Kelly, president.

Jedediah Bowen lived in a log house where the Graham home is on South Church street. For a time, prayer and preaching services were held in his home. Later, the Welsh Baptist church was erected next to his home. John Bowen, his grandson, was a civil war veteran.

H. S. Pierce, was president of the First National Bank.

'Ad' and 'Tom' Durfee ran a "bus" line for many years from Central City to Wayne street for trains to Olyphant and other towns south.

T. V. Powderly became commissioner general of immigration. He was known to us as "Uncle Terry."

John Nealon was a merchant for 29 years and mayor two years.